1: Jenness--168-169 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 855

"A parent seldom addresses his child by its proper name, but simply calls it nutarara, 'my child', or more simply still nutarak 'child', which is the term that other adults employ towards it. If the child be an adopted one, tiguara 'my adopted relative' is often used instead. Once the danger of exposure is [169] over it receives all the care and attention that its parents can lavish on it. The mother carries it everywhere on her back underneath her coat, and whenever it cries she rocks it backwards and forwards, patting it on the back and singing some popular song to lull it to sleep; if this fails to quiet it she walks with it up and down along the floor in front of the sleeping platform. Often, if you push back her hood, you may see the infant sleeping soundly on her back. Sometimes she lays it on the bed, covering its face with a skin in summer to keep off the flies. Little charms are attached to its clothes; a bone from the fore-flipper of a rough seal on its shoulder, or the penis bone of the seal on its wrist, will make it a good sealer, while scraps of caribou skin on the other shoulder will make it a good caribou hunter.(1) Aksiatak's wife Nik wore a short flap of deerskin on her

"1. This is, of course, sympathetic magic of the usual type. Similarly Higilak once wrapped the body of a live bumble bee in a shred of cloth and tied it round a pup's neck to make the animal fierce and bold like the bee."

own belt to make her baby a good hunter in after years. As the child grows older, and can bear stronger food, the mother masticates small pieces of meat and puts them into its mouth. The father too takes great pride in his offspring and will often play with his baby inside his hut, nursing it in his arms or dandling it on his knees; for an Eskimo seldom rests a child on one knee, as we do, but lays it on his lap between his knees, with its feet pointing forward.

A casual visitor might gather the impression that children are badly cared for by their parents. Both boys and girls run about in the most wretched clothing, full of gapes and rents, often cut down, indeed, from the worn-out garments of their elders. Even their footgear is of the same description, and often it is soaking wet. It must be remembered, however, that these are their oldest clothes, and that there is always a good warm set of garments carefully stored away for special occasions. Our children do not wear their Sunday clothes at school, nor do the Eskimo children wear their cleanest and finest garments when playing about in the greasy snow in and around their houses. If a child's feet become wet and cold it can always run inside the house and put on other boots, leaving the old ones to dry on the rack above the lamp."

28: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1946
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

Within the snow-hut or tent a baby sprawled stark naked on bedskins, or wore only a caribou-fur diaper, covered at times with a second diaper of either caribou skin or sealskin that fastened around the waist with a cord. Without other protection than this the mother carried it on the trail under the fur coat. In very cold weather, however, she generally added warm mittens and socks of any available fur, caribou, marmot, or hare; often, too, a square of fur on the back fastened by two cords, one around the neck and the other around the waist. The baby's front, of course, needed no covering, as it rested directly against the mother's bare back.

As soon as the child was old enough to stand on its feet it received a proper suit of clothing, generally made at first in one piece (Figure 34). The front, as in European combinations, was slit down the middle and laced across; another slit passed between the legs. Each mitten was sewn half-way around the edge of the sleeve, leaving a gap through which the hand could protrude; and there was a hood that pulled up over the head. Sealskin shoes completed the costume, which was naturally doubled in cold weather and augmented by separate outer stockings. Occasionally, a cap was substituted for the usual hood, and a few suits had the slit, not in front, but at the back. Although the usual material was caribou fur, marmot fur was nearly as common in districts where marmots were plentiful, because it did not spoil so readily with dampness.

At the age of about 5 or 6 the child again changed its costume. It now wore a separate coat shaped like its parent's, but often lacking the long tail; combination trousers and stockings held up either by a belt or by a strap over one shoulder; outer stockings reaching to just below the knees; and sealskin shoes. Some of these combination trousers and stockings fitted very tightly, others were broad and flowing. The clothing of a girl at this time was indistinguishable from that of a boy, except that her coat often had the wide shoulders that characterized her mother's coat. Some girls retained this child's costume up to the time of their marriage,[1] but most boys and girls adopted full adult clothing as they approached adolescence. It was quite common for a child to wear an inner suit, all in one piece, beneath an outer suit in which the coat and trousers were separate.

There was seldom any decoration on the outer suit made all in one piece, and such as did occur seemed to consist merely of narrow white bands of caribou fur around the sleeves and possibly elsewhere. Boys' and girls' combination outer trousers and stockings occasionally showed similar white bands. From Coronation Gulf I obtained a girl's combination outer trousers and stockings that had borne two parallel stripes of white fur around each leg just above the ankle. When the fur became worn, however, and the costume shabby, it had been reversed to serve as inner combinations, and decorated down the front of the legs and around the ankles, on the now outer, hairless side, with narrow bands of black and white sealskin similar to those on women's outer stockings (Figure 35). No other inner combination suit, to my knowledge, bore any decoration; this one seemed as unique of its kind as the woman's inner stockings illustrated in Figure 33.

[1] For a photograph showing a marriageable girl in this costume see Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, vol. XII, pt. A, Pl. VIII (p. 264 top right).

28: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1946
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Figure 34. Child's combination suit. IV.D.178. Approx. 1/3.

28: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1946
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

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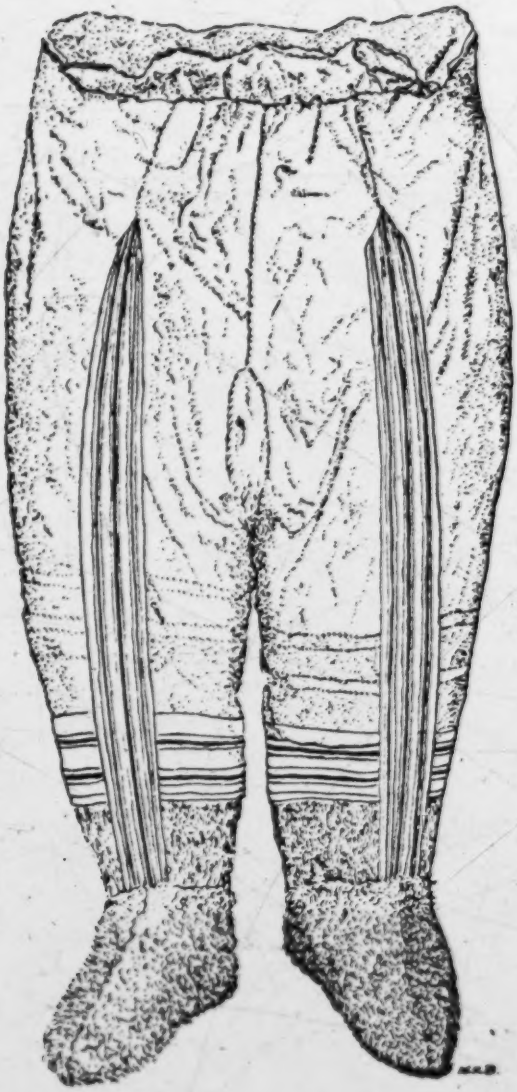

Figure 33. Girls' combination trousers and stockings. IV.D.988. Approx. 1/5.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

winter months; as soon as they left this place for the sealing-grounds they might sew no more until the sun returned at the end of January. The men brought in the pokes of blubber cached on Read Island six months before, and the carcasses of the caribou shot during the migration just ended; in idle moments they repaired their sealing weapons or helped their wives to scrape the caribou hides.

The monotony of this new life affected the children much more than the adults. Throughout the summer they had shared our hunting and fishing, packed their burdens like the rest of us, and played an active rôle in every enterprise. They had gained a status in those months far beyond their years. Now they were reduced to children again, helpless dependents whose principal duty was to carry messages from one hut to another. Their bows and arrows, which had secured us many a duck and ptarmigan, were useless now that the birds had flown, and their fishing-lines lay idle in the family dunnage-bags, buried away until another spring. Little wonder, then, that they chafed under the confinement and tedium of a sedentary life, where no new playmates, no dances, no visitors from other tribes, breathed fresh life into our humdrum circle. A strange irritability seemed to taint their merry, care-free natures, and they wept over trifles that a month before would have passed unheeded.

Icehouse told Jennie one morning to brush the snow

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

from some clothes that were packed in a bag on the house-roof. Jennie refused, and petulantly turned her face to the wall. Her cousin entered the hut, and, seeing his playmate sulking in the corner, jeered at her behind her back; but a backhand that neatly struck his eye changed his jeering to a wail. The indignant Icehouse poked her daughter with a stick until she, too, added her voice to the lamentable chorus. Partnership in grief then brought comfort to both children, who left the hut together and built a common playhouse in the snow outside. Pain alone could not make them weep so readily. I had seen Jennie stumble against a stone and bruise her knee so severely that she limped for two or three days; but when some one asked her if she were hurt she straightened up resentfully and marched ahead without a tear.

Even I grew restless at our inactivity. Bernard Harbour seemed so near across the strait, and for seven months I had heard no word of English, and received no news of my comrades on the expedition. In clear weather we could see the Liston and Sutton Islands on the horizon, and the station lay only twelve miles beyond. The dark streaks in the sky that reflected open water had disappeared, and a short excursion seaward revealed no wide cracks or unsafe places in the solid ice. Conditions might be different between the islands and the mainland, but Ikpuck thought that I could make the passage without danger.